[27th February 1956

House-sites for Harijans

* 3137 *Q*.—SRI A. MUTHUSWAMY (on behalf of Sri M. Kattimuthu) : Will the Hon. the Minister for Religious Endowments and Transport be pleased to state—

(*a*) how many Harijans of Elangianoor in Vriddhachalam taluk have paid advances of Rs. 1,000 each for house-sites; and

(*b*) the reasons for the delay in granting them house-sites?

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN : (*a*) It is not a fact, Sir, that each Harijan paid an advance of Rs. 1,000 for house-sites. One hundred and fifty Harijan families desired to shift from their existing cheri in Elangianoor village to Mamathur village and 131 families who owned house-sites in the cheri deposited between April 1952 and March 1955, a sum of Rs. 2,300 towards the cost of house-sites in Mamathur village.

(*b*) The Government sanctioned the acquisition of house-sites in Mamathur village in November 1951 subject to the condition that the entire cost of house-sites, viz., Rs. 4,312–8–0 was recovered from the 131 Harijan families who were not willing to relinquish their house-sites. It was also ordered that the other 19 families be granted house-sites free of cost. As the 131 Harijans neither relinquished their old house-sites nor paid in full the cost of acquisition of the new house-sites, the acquisition was not proceeded with. The Government have since, as a special case, waived the payment of the balance of the cost of new house-sites for 131 families and ordered the acquisition of the land required for providing house-sites to all the 150 families.

SRI A. M. RATHNASWAMY : In view of the seriousness of the housing problem not only in the place mentioned in the question but in the State as a whole have the Government any specific scheme to tackle this problem, particularly the problem of houses for Harijans and poorer classes in the State?

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN : The Government have got a scheme. If a separate question is put, I can answer. But it may not be possible to answer in detail during question hour. It may be possible when the concerned Demand for Grant comes up for voting.

SRI V. S. SIVAPRAKASAM : May I know whether the difficulties experienced by Harijans in getting house-sites within a reasonable time are common throughout the State and the creation of a separate department known as the Harijan Welfare Department has not in any way improved their lot in this respect?

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN : I do not agree that the creation of a separate department has not improved their lot. The hon. Member who put this question was one of those who had been persistently insisting upon the creation of a separate department, and he himself is a member of the State Harijan Welfare Committee, and has seen the good work done by the department since its inception. The Government have gone to a very great

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extent in helping Harijans in that for a land costing Rs. 10,000, the Harijans paid only Rs. 2,000 and the Government waived the recovery of the balance of Rs. 8,000.

SRI M. DHARMALINGAM : One of the difficulties facing the Harijans is the housing problem and I am proud to say that the Government are taking adequate steps to provide them with house-sites. In spite of the attempts of the Government, 75 per cent of Harijans have not yet been provided with house-sites even after some of them paying the reasonable market value of the land, and I think this is due to insufficiency of staff. Will the Government consider the desirability of appointing one or more Assistant Welfare Officers of the grade of Tahsildars and Revenue Inspectors to expedite the disposal of applications for house-sites?

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN : Wherever the Collectors of Districts have recommended, we have provided the District Welfare Officers with increased staff. Particularly in Chingleput district, we have increased the staff by appointing a special overseer, some clerks, etc.

SRI M. JAGANNATHAN : If it is the policy of the Government to grant house-sites to Harijans free of cost, may I know why advances were collected from the Harijans of Dasarpuram?

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN : The main question relates to Elangianoor village. I do not know whether I should answer this question. I have no objection to answer, but I leave it to you, Mr. Speaker.

* 3138 *Q.*—SRI A. MUTHUSWAMY : Will the Hon. the Minister for Religious Endowments and Transport be pleased to state—

(*a*) why house-sites have not been allotted to the Harijans of Dasarpuram in Tirukkoyilur taluk, though they have already paid their respective shares towards the cost of the sites; and

(*b*) when the house-sites will be made ready for their use?

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN : (*a*) & (*b*) The Collector proposed the acquisition of house-sites for the Harijans of Dasarpuram cheri which is within the limits of Tirukoilur Class I Panchayat. Under the existing policy, the funds of the Harijan Welfare Department should not be utilised on the provision of house-sites in Class I Panchayats and in such cases the Government can undertake acquisition only if either the Panchayat Board or the Harijans concerned bear the entire cost of acquisition The Harijans have contributed Rs. 2,990 and the total cost of acquisition is estimated at Rs. 10,225. The Government have however agreed as a special case to meet the balance of the cost of acquisition in this case. Acquisition proceedings have been instituted and the Collector will allot sites to Harijans after acquisition proceedings are completed.